THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) Recently, in tome of the cases investigated by the customs authorities, it appeared that the returning Non Resident Indians have been used to carry gold for a consideration in terms of air-fare and/ or cash compensation. The liberalised Gold Import Scheme introduced in 1992 was reviewed in 1994 so as to permit extension of the facility of gold import upto 15 days after the arrival of the passenger as also imports through MMTC and SBI for delivery of such gold in India to the returning NRIs.

The main objectives of the liberalised Gold Import Scheme, interalia, were to encourage the import of gold through licit channels against payment of customs duty in foreign exchange and to discourage smuggling of gold. It has been reported that the introduction of this Scheme has had a healthy impact on checking clandestine imports of gold. At present, there is no proposal before the Government to review this Scheme.

Setting up of T.V. Centres in North Eastern Region

373. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether some T.V. Centres are being set up in North Eastern Region in general and Assam in particular;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

.(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CM. IBRAHIM): (a) to (c) While 40 TV transmitters of varying power are presently under implementation in the North Eastern region, 19 more transmitter projects, including 3 HPTs, 3 LPTs and one Transposer in Assam, are envisaged to be set up in the region subject to availability of resources and infrastructural facilities.

Allocation for repair, maintenance and modernisation of airports

374. SHRIMATI JAYANTIPATNAIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation made during the current financial year for repair, maintenance and modernisation of each airport;

(b) the allocation made for the same purposes during the last three years;

(c) whether funds have also been made available for some of the airports for upgradation;

(d) if so, the status of work relating to maintenance, repairing, construction, upgradation and modernisation; and

(e) airport-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CM. IBRAHIM): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

News Item under the Caption "India is not among top 20 Tourist attractions"

375. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:
SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item appeared in the Times of India dated 9th October, 1996 under the caption "India is not among top 20 tourist attractions";

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take/have taken any steps to attract more tourist by providing more facilities and relevant inforamtion regarding the position of law and order and such other information;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what other special steps Government propose to take to attract more tourists?